

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

December 1, 2017

The Honorable Paul D. Ryan
The Speaker
U.S. House of Representatives
H-232, The Capitol Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Minority Leader
U.S. House of Representatives
H-204, The Capitol Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Speaker Ryan and Leader Pelosi,

We urge swift action to pass S. 829, the *AFG and SAFER Program Reauthorization Act*. This legislation would reauthorize the highly successful Assistance to Firefighters (AFG), Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response (SAFER), and Fire Prevention and Safety (FP&S) grant programs. The authorization for these programs expired this year on September 30th and these programs will sunset on January 2nd, 2018.

As you evaluate possible actions to reauthorize the AFG, SAFER and FP&S grant programs, we would like to emphasize the need to maintain their current authorization levels and eliminate the sunset dates for these programs. The Senate unanimously passed S. 829, which would fulfill both of these needs. If passed by the House, S.829 would provide these grant programs with the resources and flexibility needed to ensure firefighters have the training and equipment required to keep our constituents safe.

Recent natural disasters like Hurricanes Harvey, Irma and Maria -- along with the massive wildfires in California and other parts of the Pacific Northwest -- have shown the necessity of well-trained and -equipped local firefighters. In these situations, it is often local firefighters and other first responders who are the first on the scene before help from elsewhere can arrive. These first responders provide immediate assistance to victims and supplement federal assistance by immediately mitigating the impact of a disaster. In the aftermath of these disasters (when every second is critical), it is the proper training and equipment provided to local firefighters by AFG/SAFER grants that often mean the difference between life and death.

Congress created the AFG, SAFER and FP&S grant programs to address the baseline needs of our nation's fire and emergency services. The funding provided by these programs has saved countless lives by providing fire departments with the equipment, training and staffing needed to

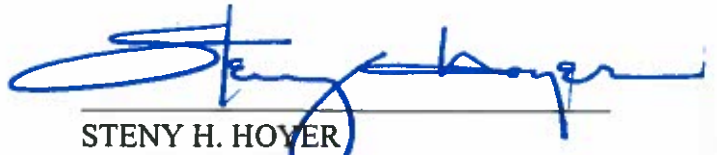
swiftly respond to over 30 million calls annually. These programs also have improved firefighters' response capabilities and prevented numerous fires through safety programs targeted toward high-risk populations.

It is critical that first responders have the resources necessary to perform their critical role within our districts. The House can ensure this by passing S. 829, the *AFG and SAFER Program Reauthorization Act*. Thank you for your consideration and your continued commitment to the nation's fire services.

Sincerely,



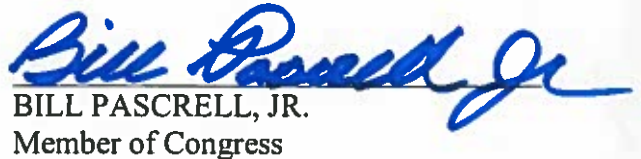
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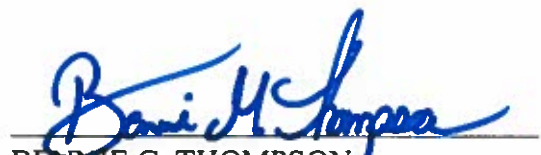
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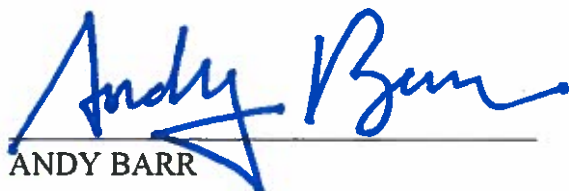
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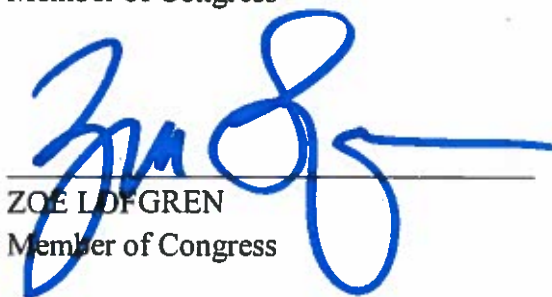
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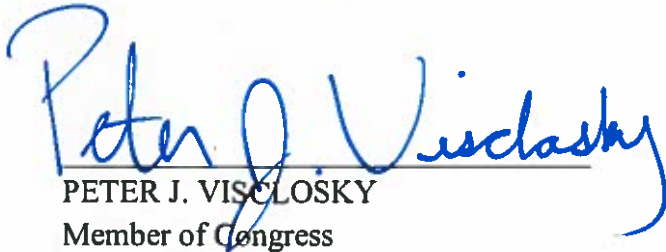
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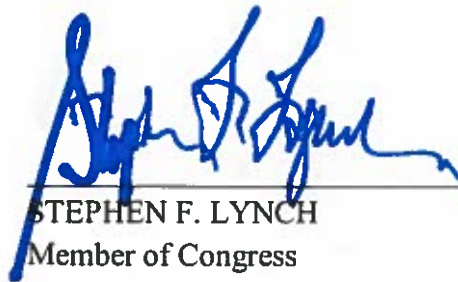
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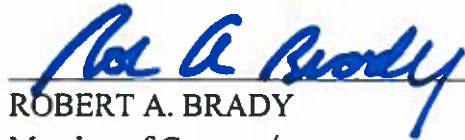
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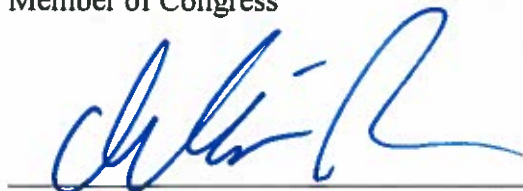
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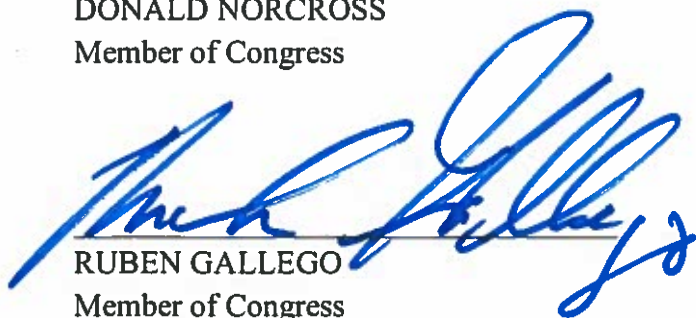
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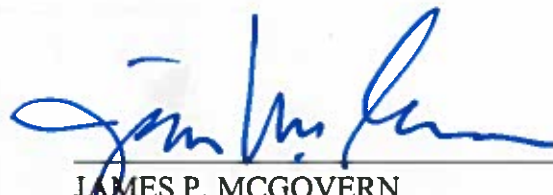
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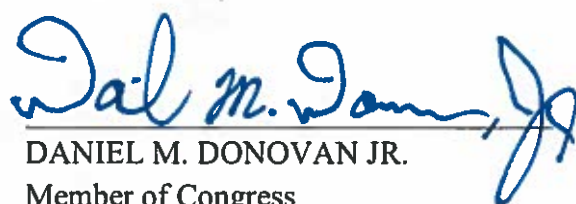
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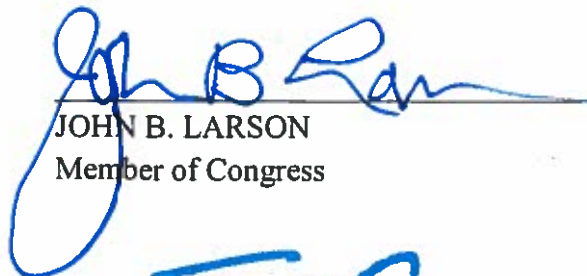
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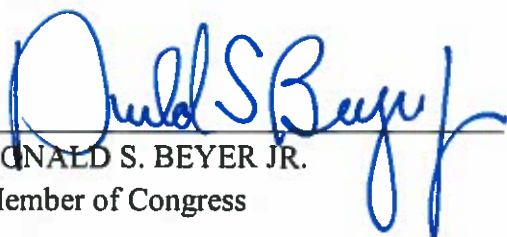
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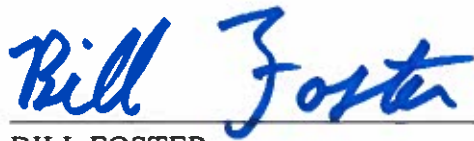
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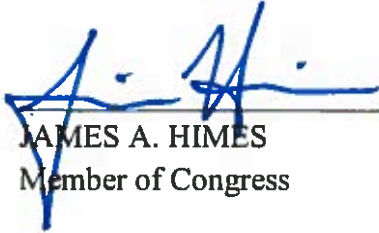
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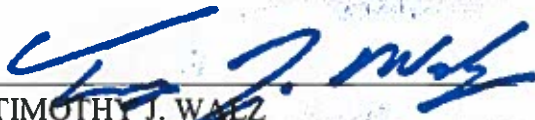
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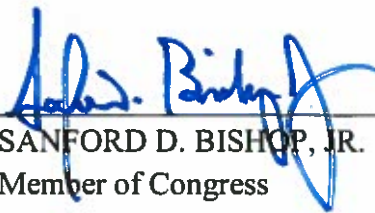
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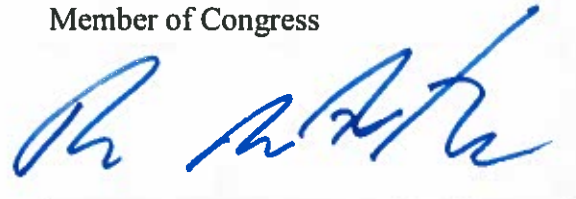

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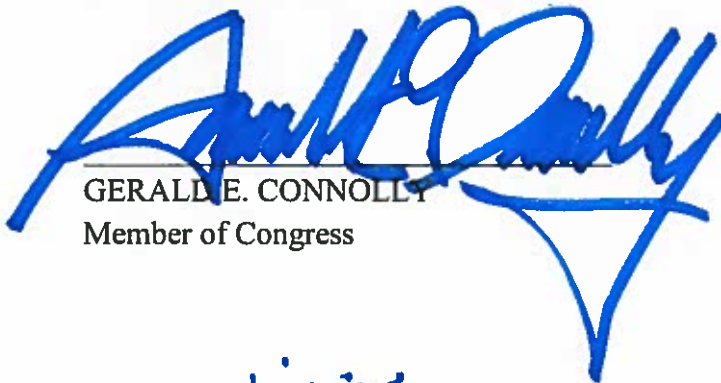

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cc The Honorable Kevin McCarthy